USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

Iraq: Crop Progress Report

MY 2008/09

October Report – Week 1 **October 3rd, 2008**

1. Production for MY 2008/09 winter grains is forecasted to be lower than the previous year. Production decreases are related to late rainfall during the start of season combined with below normal seasonal precipitation. The predominantly rainfed northern governorates were impacted the most. Lower production is also expected in the central and southern governorates.

2. Summer crop production for MY 2008/09 is forecasted to be lower than the previous year. Production decreases are related to drought conditions and irrigation limitations. The most significant production decreases are expected in the central and southern governorates.

3. MODIS NDVI change analysis (Departure from 5-year average) showed significantly less summer crop abundance in the governorates of Diyala and Al Anbar (Figure 1). The governorate of At Ta'min also showed significantly less crop; however, NDVI time series data also revealed signs of earlier harvest. Parts of Babil and Wasit showed significantly more crop abundance than the 5-year average (Figure 2), but the overall region showed less than average crop abundance (Figure 3).

4. Two-week weather outlook stated dry conditions with no indication of significant precipitation events. AFWA dekadal precipitation between September 21st and September 30th indicated some precipitation in the northern most governorates, but rainfall for the past 30 days remained insignificant (Figure 4).

5. Surface wetness anomaly derived from SSMI passive microwave from September 22nd to September 28th showed slight moisture increases for the same northern governorates (Figure 5). Average decadal temperature showed a drop in temperatures over the past 20 days, but temperatures remain above normal for the central and southern governorates (Figure 6). Above normal temperatures are expected for the next 10 to 14 days.

6. Long-range seasonal forecasts developed by the United Kingdom Met Office and the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF) showed +60% likelihood for above normal temperatures and below normal precipitation during the months of October, November and December (Figures 7 & 8). * Long-range forecasts must not be used alone for decision making.

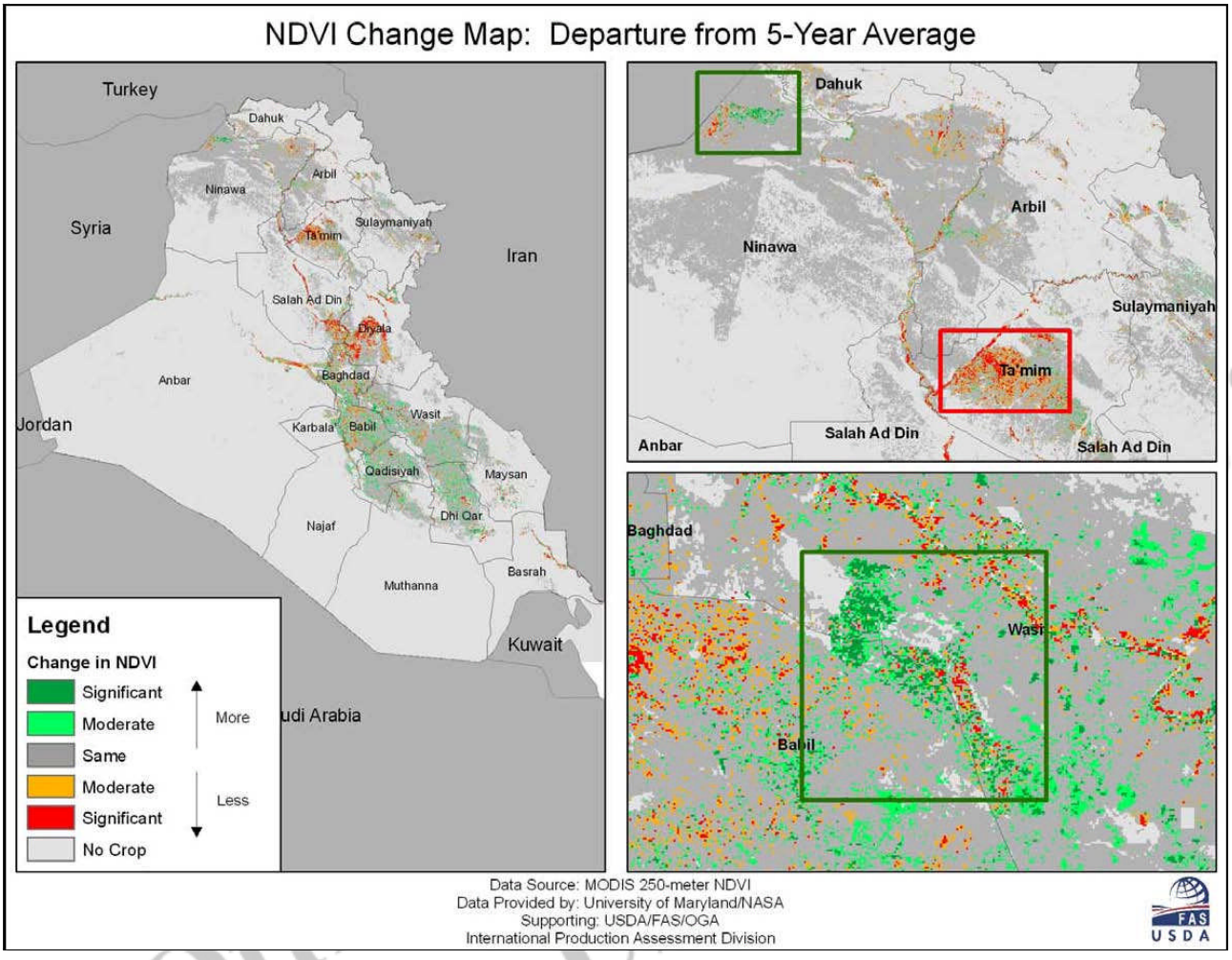

Figure 1: MODIS NDVI departure from 5-year average: August 28th, 2008 to September 12th, 2008.

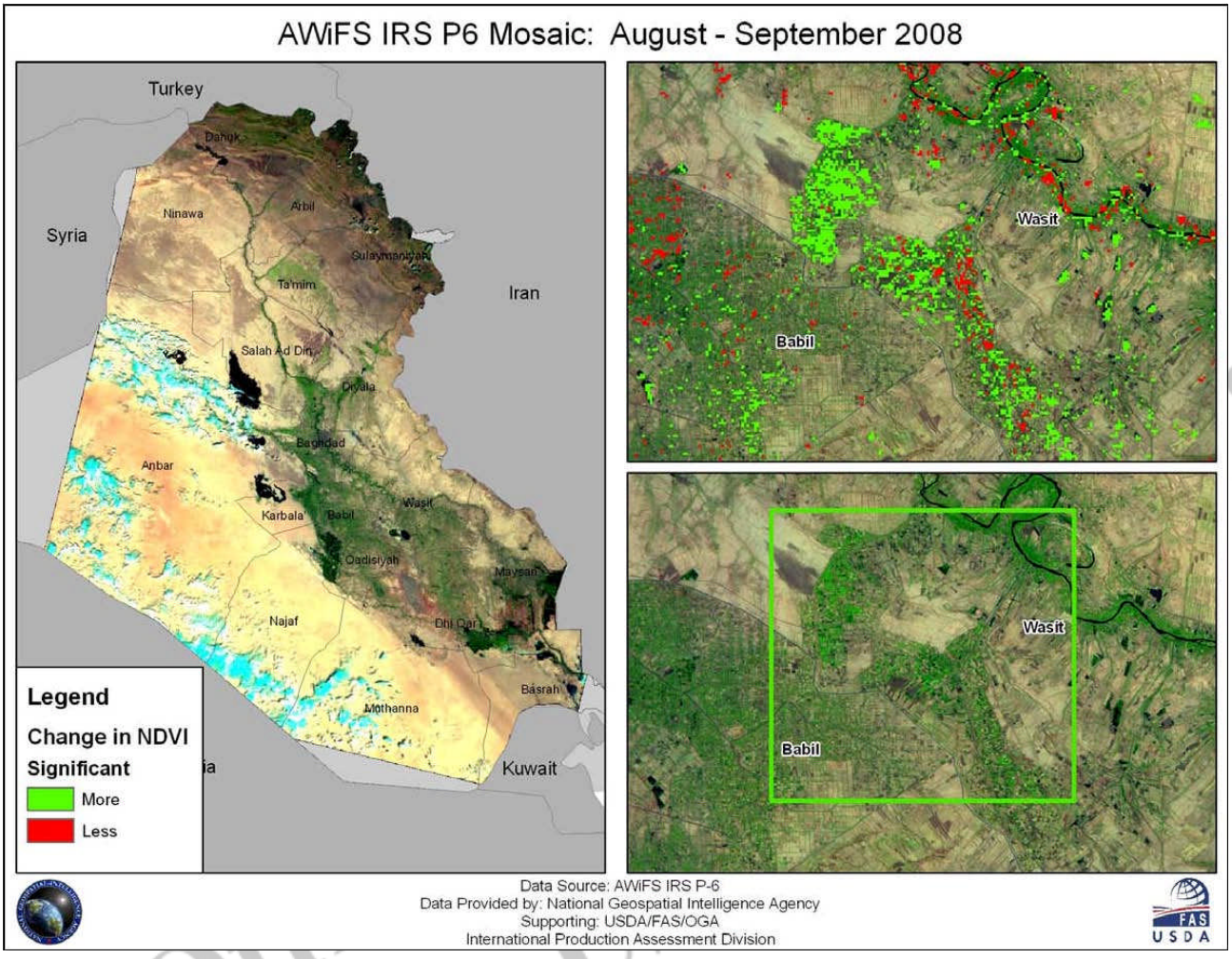

Figure 2: MODIS NDVI change analysis map overlayed on AWiFS IRS P-6 surface reflectance mosaic.

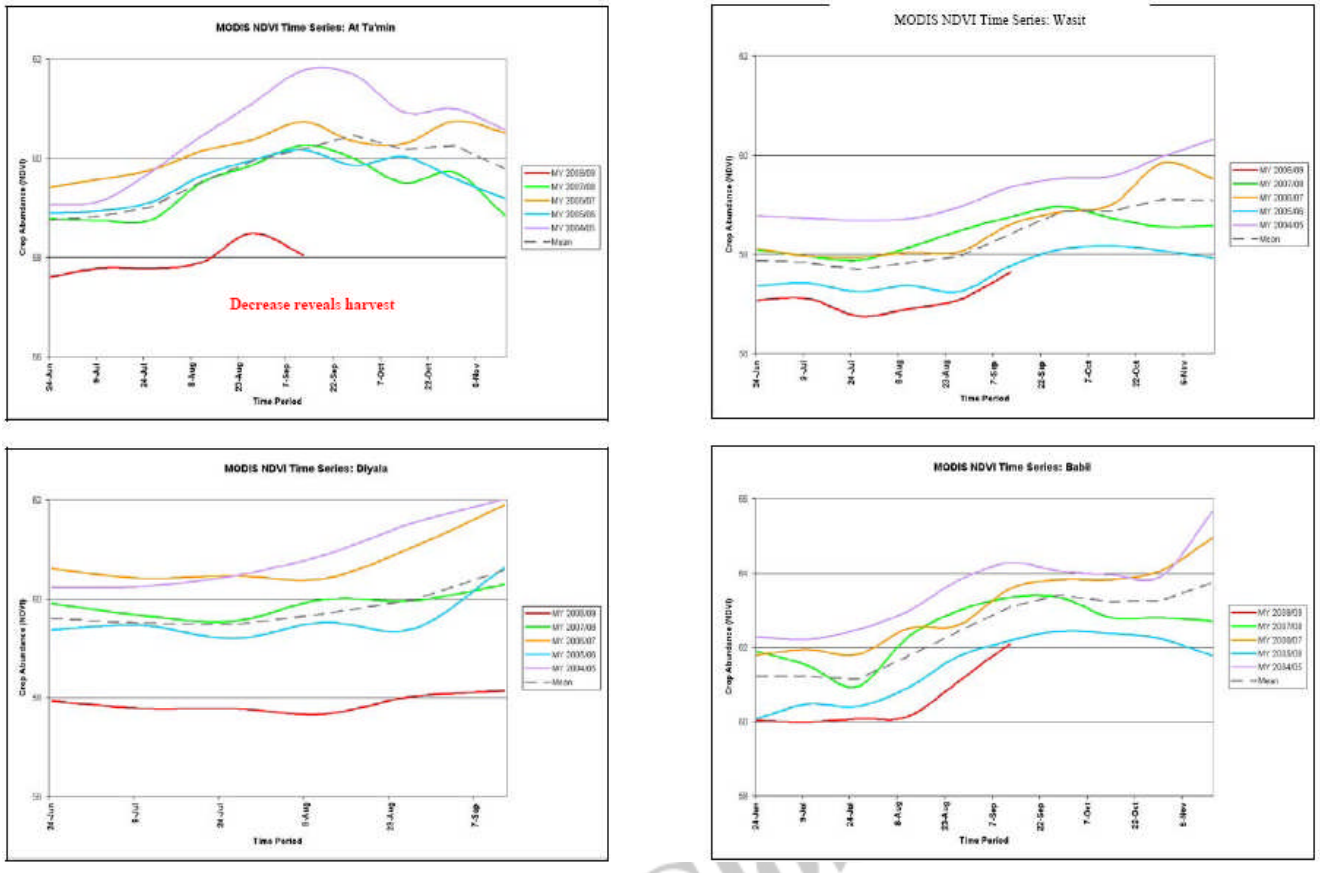

Figure 3: MODIS NDVI time series data: Babil and Wasit show similar values to MY 2005/06, but below 5-year average NDVI.

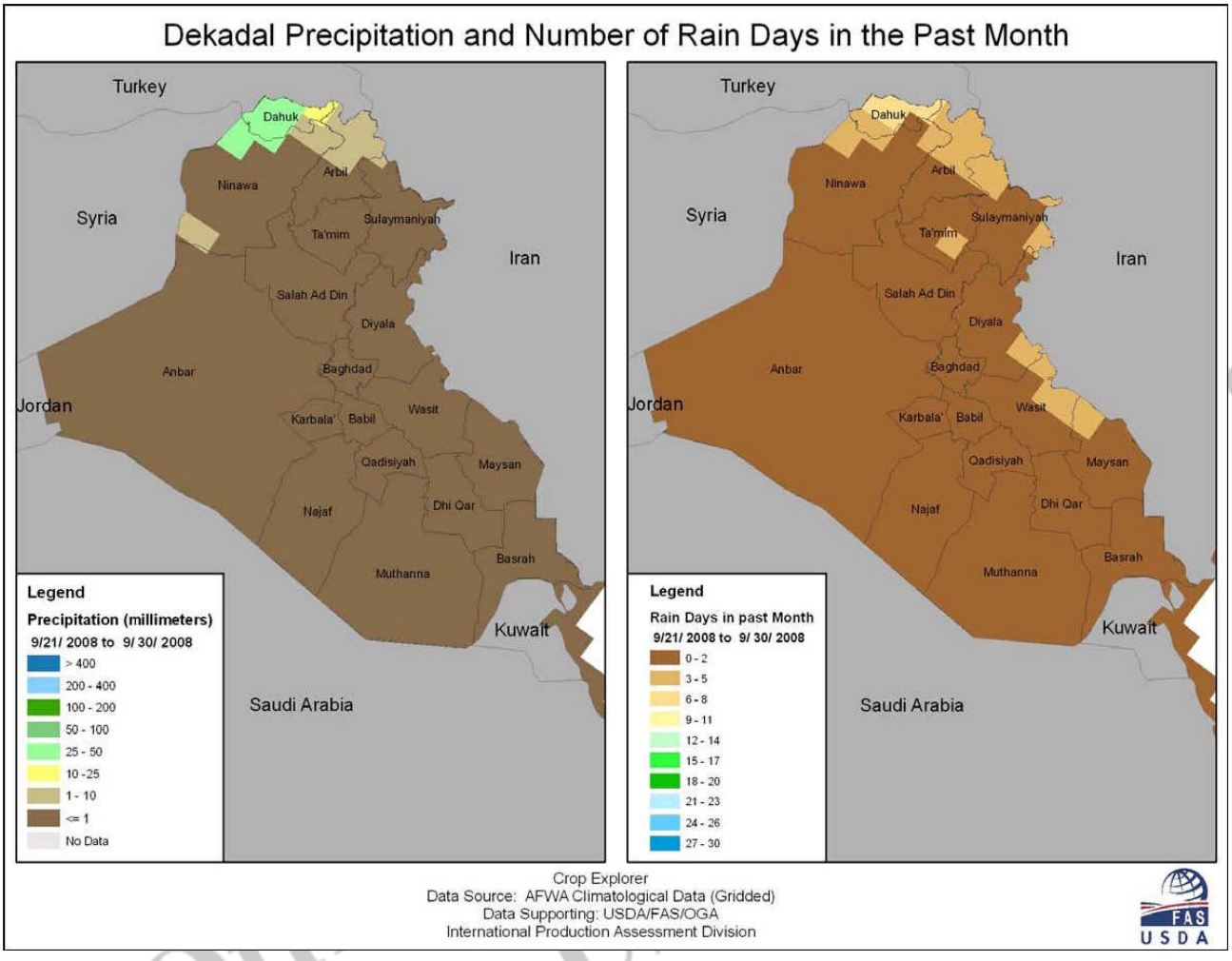

Figure 4: Dekadal precipitation and number of rain days in the past 30 days.

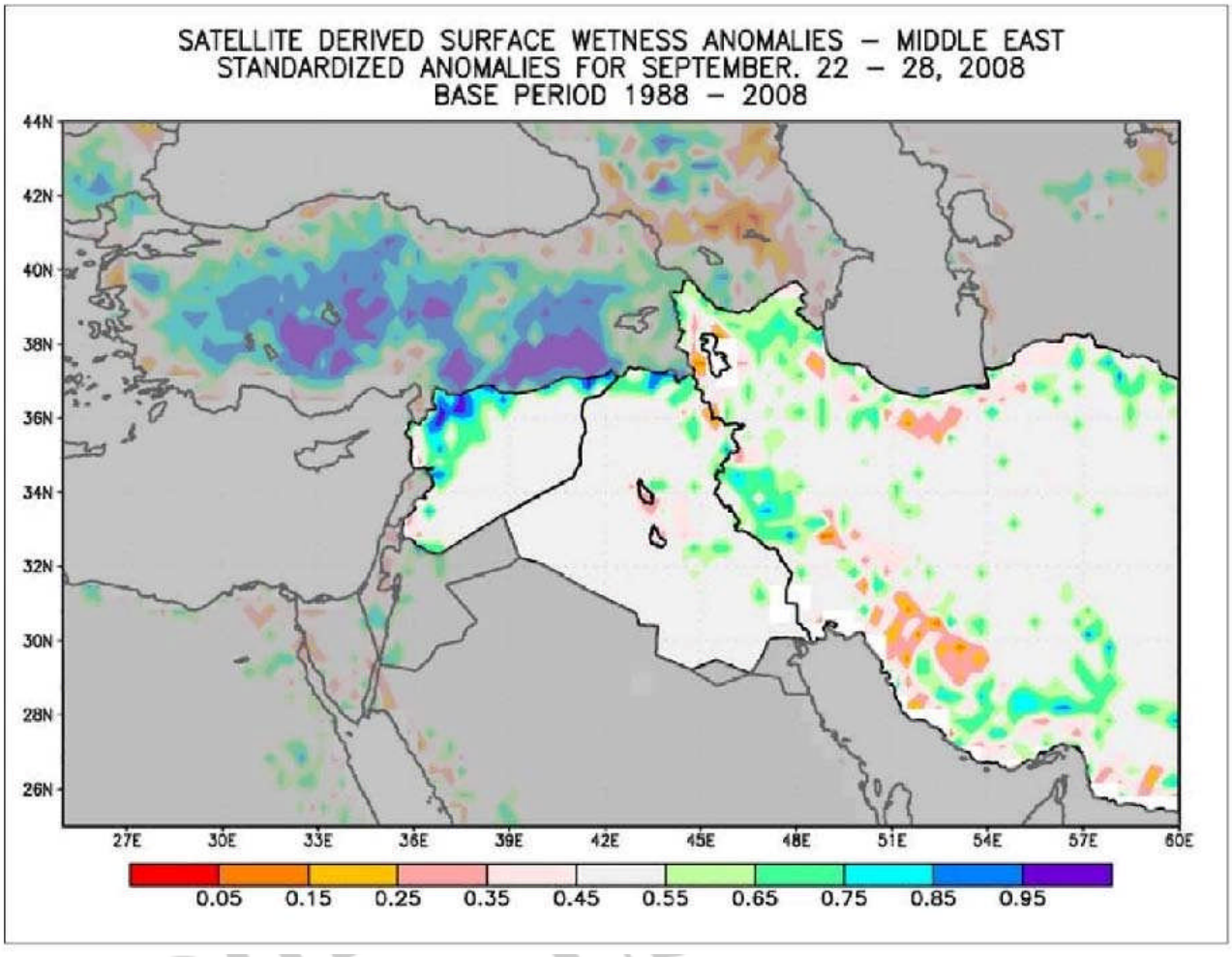

Figure 5: Weekly surface wetness anomaly derived from SSMI passive microwave data.

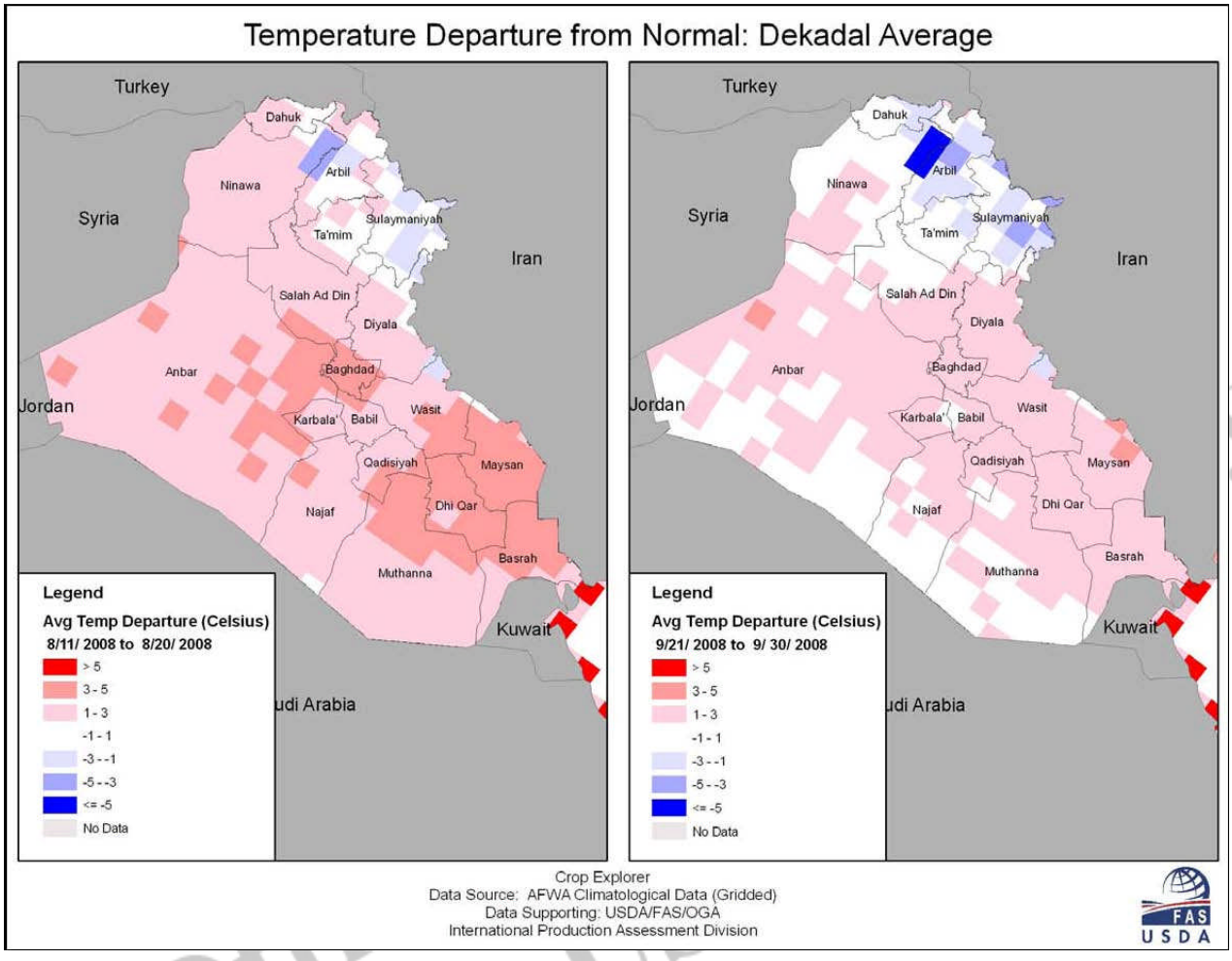

Figure 6: Average temperature departure from normal: AFWA dekadal data.

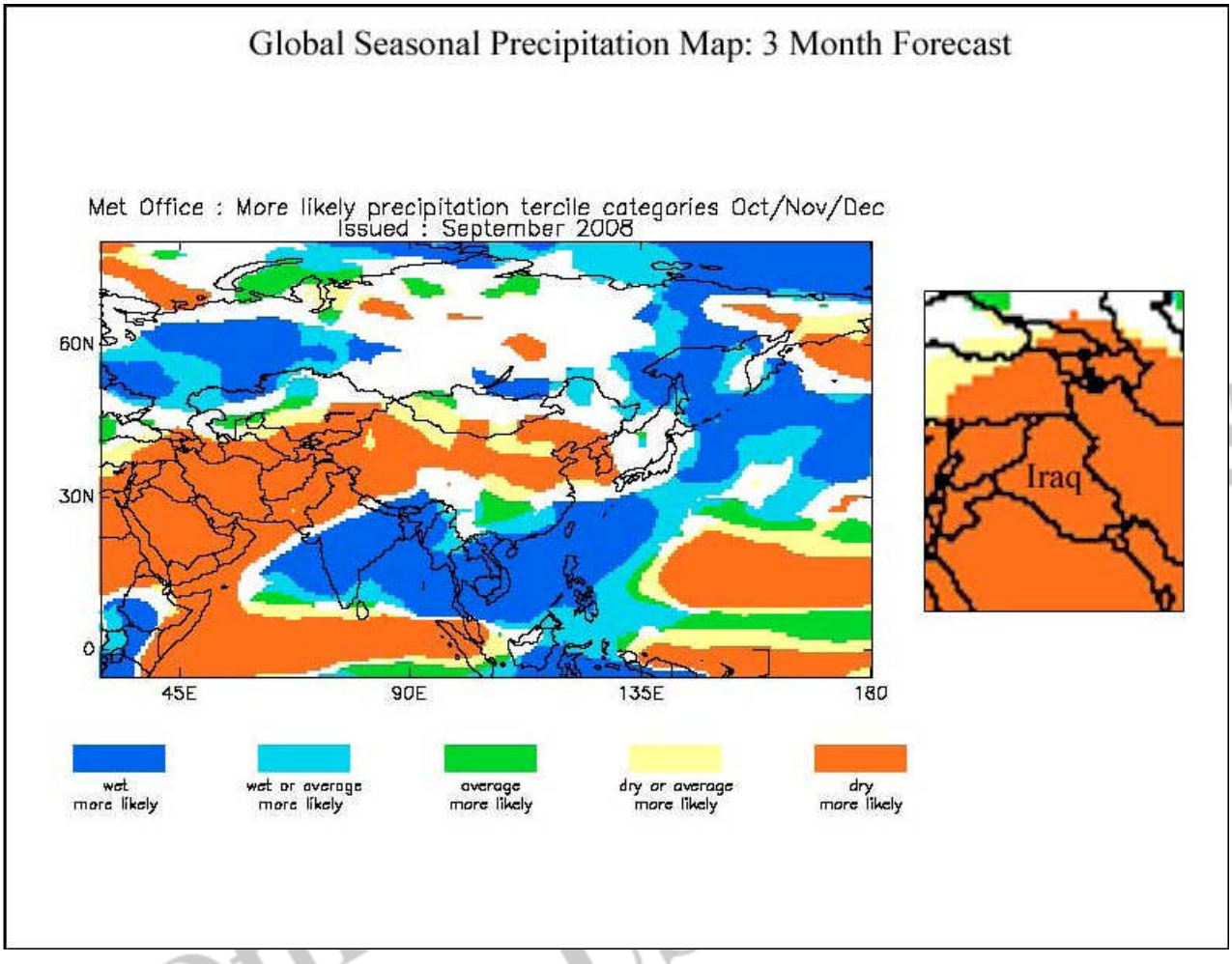

Figure 7: Met Office tercile precipitation forecast: Precipitation probability for the months of October, November, and December.

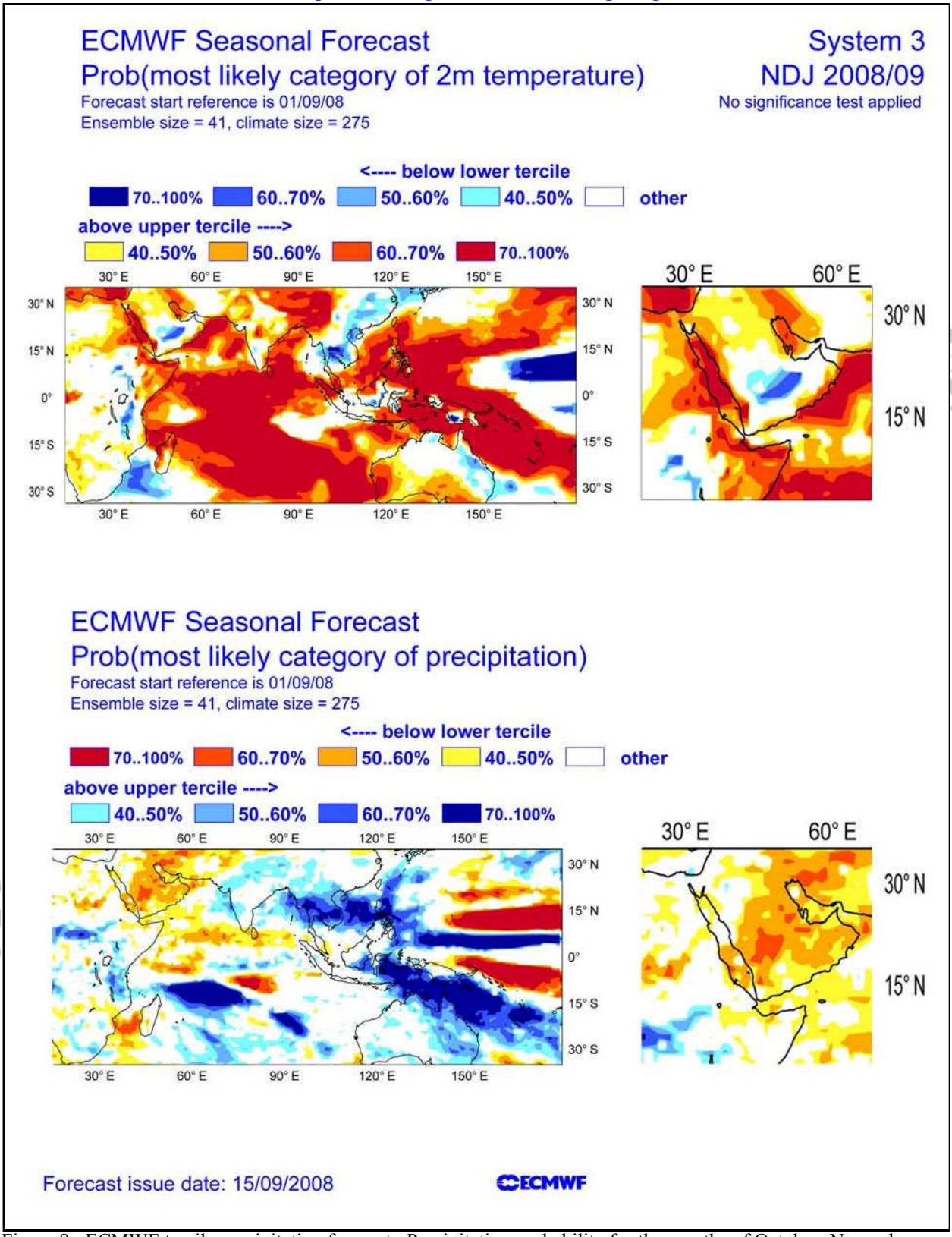

Figure 8: ECMWF tercile precipitation forecast: Precipitation probability for the months of October, November, and December.